

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Initially, Applicant would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided.

Upon entry of the above amendments claims 2 and 6 will have been amended. Claims 2-13 are currently pending, claims 5 and 8-13 being withdrawn from consideration in a previous Official Action. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 2-4, 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 7-323403 (JP '403) in view of HOPPER et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,520,722).

Without acquiescing to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection, Applicants submit that claims 2 and 6 have been amended solely in order to more clearly recite the presently claimed invention and to expedite prosecution of the present application.

In this regard, Applicants submit that JP '403 and HOPPER, alone or in any properly reasoned combination, lack any disclosure of the combination of elements as recited in claims 2 and 6.

In particular, both claims 2 and 6 generally set forth a saw blade including: left and right set teeth, which are set in a lateral direction, as viewed in a cutting direction of the cutting teeth; wherein each of the left and right set teeth is a dovetail shaped set tooth having a tooth tip which is gradually enlarged in the lateral direction in addition to being set, the left teeth having opposing sides inclined in generally the same direction and the right teeth having opposing sides inclined in generally the same direction; and a straight

tooth, which is not set in the lateral direction, as viewed in the cutting direction of the cutting teeth, wherein the straight tooth including a dovetail shaped straight tooth having a tooth tip which is gradually enlarged in the lateral direction, and wherein an upper surface of each tooth, including the tooth tip, defines a planar inclined surface.

In setting forth the rejection, the Examiner asserts that JP '403 discloses the general structure of the presently claimed saw blade. However, the Examiner acknowledges that JP '403 does not disclose the tooth tip being gradually enlarged in a lateral direction. Nevertheless, the Examiner relies on HOPPER as purportedly supplying the acknowledged deficiencies of JP '403.

Contrary to the Examiner's assertions, Applicants submit that the devices of the applied art are very different structurally from the presently claimed invention.

More specifically, Applicants submit that the applied prior art discloses the teeth having a curved profiled upper surface (see, e.g., Figs. 4A and 5A of HOPPER, and Fig. 1 of JP '403).

Therefore, even assuming, *arguendo*, that the teachings of HOPPER and JP '403 have been properly combined, Applicants submit that the applied prior art (alone or in any properly reasoned combination) still does not disclose at least the presently claimed upper surface of each tooth, including the tooth tip, defining a planar inclined surface.

Accordingly, Applicants submits that the rejection of claims 2-4, 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is improper and should be withdrawn.

In view of the remarks herein-contained, Applicants submit that independent claims 2 and 6 are in condition for allowance. With regard to dependent claims 3, 4 and 7, Applicants assert that they are allowable on their own merit, as well as because of their

respective dependencies from independent claims 2 and 6, which Applicants have shown to be allowable.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

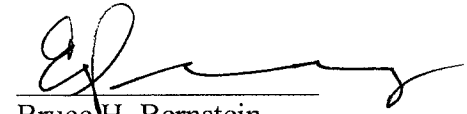
SUMMARY

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request an indication to that effect. Applicants have argued the allowability of the claims and pointed out deficiencies of the applied reference. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate.

Applicants note that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
Yuji NAGANO et al.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce H. Bernstein', written over a horizontal line.

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